

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TAWSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 16th
SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.00 p.m.**

Present: - Councillor Bowden (Chair)
Councillors Bates, Jenkins, Knight, Lofthouse, Needham and Short.

NDC Councillors Coombs and Knight

DCC Councillors Leaver and Tyldesley

M Isaac (Clerk)

In Attendance: Parishioner/Members of the Public – 4

81. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors East, Mason and Norman

82. PUBLIC SESSION

The Chair stated that North Devon Council were undertaking a periodic Community Governance Review of Parish Council boundaries and had sought views from Parish Council's regarding any suggested amendments. Barnstaple Town Council had put forward proposals for consideration that affected Tawstock Parish and also Fremington and Landkey. She reported that she as Chair, Councillor Knight and the Clerk had met with similar representatives from Fremington and Landkey Parish Council's in July, to co-ordinate a plan of action. In order to make residents aware of the proposals and possible consequences if the boundaries were changed Tawstock Parish Council had produced a leaflet that had been delivered by hand to all properties in the Urban area and posted to all properties in the Rural area. To date there had been 155 response to North Devon Council from residents. She thanked Councillor Knight for producing the leaflet and those Councillors who hand delivered the leaflet.

Parishioners in attendance thanked Councillors for their efforts in raising the awareness of the review and possible consequences to residents and opposed the proposals put forward by Barnstaple Town Council.

It was stated that representation should be made to North Devon to extend the consultation period due to the summer recess and holidays. It was stated that such representation should be made by residents.

Questions were asked regarding the role of Parish Council's, the advantages/disadvantages of the Town Council proposals and the financial implications for residents.

A Parishioner thanked the Clerk and Councillors for getting the vacant development site in Broadclose Road cleared of weeds and the grass cut and requested that Petroc be contacted regarding the overgrown brambles etc along Old Sticklepath Road.

83. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW.

a) The Council reaffirmed the additional cost of £260.60 to post the leaflet in the rural area over the agreed budget of £150.

b) Consultation Response.

It was agreed that the Clerk, Chair and Councillor Knight draft the response to North Devon Council to include the points outlined in the leaflet and the additional consequential issues affecting the rural area and be circulated to all Members.

84. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

There were no issues brought forward by the Chair.

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations announced.

86. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported the following correspondence:

- a) E Mail from Councillor Needham that an Emergency Planning Workshop was being arranged in Westleigh. Parishes Councils were invited to attend.
- b) E Mail from Councillor Mason that the Litchardon Cross Solar Farm Community Fund was now live for grant applications.

87. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

a) Payments

RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

August

i) North Devon Council - Clerks Salary + Admin Fee	£815.82
ii) Clerks Expenses	£10.23
iii) L. Evely – Grounds Maintenance	£979.05
iv) Ucanstore.com – Storage	£60.04
v) Methodist Church – Room Hire (May - July)	£195.00

September

i) North Devon Council - Clerks Salary + Admin Fee	£955.15
ii) Clerks Expenses	£11.36
iii) L. Evely – Grounds Maintenance	£979.05
iv) L. Evely – Cleaning Play Equipment and Trimming Shrubs in Tudor Drive	£690.00
v) Solo Press – Printing Leaflet re Gov. Review (Debit Card Payment)	£95.08
vi) Barnstaple Town Council - Play Area Inspections (July – September)	£225.00

vii)PKF Littlejohn – External Audit	£252.00
viii) Post Office – Stamps to post Rural Area Leaflet re Com Gov Review Consultation. (Debit Card Payment) £295.80	
ix) J. Bowden – Envelopes for Rural Leaflet re Com Gov Review Consultation	£19.72
x) Ucanstore.com – Storage	£30.02

b) Financial Position: Update

The current financial position at 3 August 2025 Current A/C £34,117.31 (includes £6,581.62 ringed fenced for Tower View Project) and Business Reserve A/C £16,581.95 was noted.

c) Audit 2024/25.

The Council noted that the accounts for 2024/25 had been signed off by the external auditor and the comments made. Report and Certificate (previously circulated).

88. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meetings held on 15th July 2025 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

89. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING NOT LISTED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Councillor Needham reported that pursuant to minute 72 of 15th July 2025 that he had checked the pedestrian crossing lights on the A39 by the new garage and that there were no notices except advertisements. He had not been stopped by red lights again so it was either a self-corrected fault or corrected by DCC.

90. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Leaver reported the following:

That Local Government Re-Organisation was on going. There had been a new Minister appointed by the Government who was still keen to pursue Local Government re-organisation. There were a number of options being discussed with no overall agreement between Councils on a specific option. The decision would ultimately be taken by the Secretary of State. The Government had indicated that each new Authority should represent approximately ½ million residents. Devon had roughly a 1 million population. She further stated that there was an opportunity for Parish Councils to take control of NDC and DCC assets as part of any changes.

She further reported that the Authority would be taking a more proactive approach and continue to work with any community that wished to see a new 20mph speed limit introduced, where it would be beneficial to road safety and sustainable travel, and if communities wished to self-fund their own speed limit proposal.

The Council noted a report by DCC Councillor Tyldesley that had been previously circulated to all Members.

He further reported:

That he had been informed by the Neighbourhood Highways Officer that following an expression of interest to introduce a 20 mph speed limit there was currently a 2 year waiting period due to demand and the cost to the Community Group was between £15,000 to £50,000.

That the Care Quality Commission were undertaking a full inspection of the Council on 29th September.

That the Roundswell roundabout white lining would place at the end of October.

He agreed to email the Bus Gate survey results to the Chair.

Councillor Needham expressed concern that both lanes on the approach to the new Bishops Tawton Roundabout indicated go ahead arrows that could cause a conflict.

91. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

a) NDC Councillor Knight

Councillor Knight reported the following:

That he had expressed concerns regarding a rural unitary authority which was supported by some Councillors and how it would service the DCC debt.

That the Leisure Centre had celebrated its 1 millionth paid customer.

That the Government would be forcing all Councils to 'Simpler recycling' and to recycle soft plastics at an additional cost to Local Authorities.

b) NDC Councillor Coombs

Councillor Coombs reported the following:

That North Devon Council supported the Local Government Review option model 1:4:5 of three unitaries based on - 5 North Devon, Mid Devon, Torridge, East Devon and Exeter, 1 Plymouth and 4 South Hams, Teignbridge, West Devon and Torbay. It had also been agreed to look at a Northern Devon option but this was not supported by Torridge.

That she had again made representations to NDC Planners regarding the signs at the new Roundswell garage which had not been actioned and an additional sign that had been added.

92. HIGHWAY ISSUES

There were no highway issues reported

93. PLANNING MATTERS

The Chair updated Council on the Planning Applications considered by the Planning Committee.

94. RESIGNATION.

The Clerk reported the resignation of Pat Lines and that the formal notice of the vacancy had been advertised.

95. DRUG USE ISSUES.

Councillor Lofthouse reported that he wished to raise awareness of people smoking weed etc. in the Parish. He had contacted both Petroc and NDC who both replied that it was a Police issue. It was suggested that Councillor Lofthouse raise the issue with the local PCSO.

Councillor Needham reported that there were no current problems in Tudor Park.

96. PARISH SURVEY – QUOTE TO PRINT COPIES.

Councillor Knight reported that following the costs incurred on the Local Review leaflet and distribution there was a definitive cost. The sending of the Parish Survey would need to be further discussed with a possible distribution date in early January.

It was agreed that the Clerk ask Councillor Mason to email the final draft questions to all Members.

97. GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP.

Councillor Needham reported on the Working Group meetings held on 23rd July 2025 and 27th August 2025 (previously circulated).

It was agreed:

- a) That the notes be noted.
- b) That the Statement of Internal Control (previously circulated) as recommended by the working group be adopted.
- c) That the Internal Risk Assessment (previously circulated) as recommended by the working group be adopted.
- d) That the Declaration of Interest Policy (previously circulated) as recommended by the working group be adopted.
- e) That the draft Councillors Handbook (previously circulated) be noted and that Councillors send any suggested amendments/additions to the Clerk for consideration by the Working Group.

98. HOLYWELL, TAWSTOCK -QUOTE TO PROVIDE SHRUBS.

Councillor Short reported that he considered the quote and options listed (previously circulated) were excessive and only a few shrubs were required.

It was agreed that the matter be considered at the next Parks and Open Space Committee.

99. PART TIME HANDY PERSON

Councillor Needham reported that he had spoken to the Fremington Parish Council Handyperson regarding the possibility of taking on some Parish Council work. Unfortunately, he was unable to undertake additional work due to other commitments but Fremington Parish Council had suggested that he be sub contracted to Tawstock Parish Council as and when required within his working hours for Fremington PC.

The Chair stated that Lewis Evely was happy to undertake additional maintenance jobs as and when required.

It was agreed to defer consideration to the Parks and Open Space Committee.

100. DEFIBRILLATOR – TAWSTOCK VILLAGE

Councillor Short reported that the British Heart Foundation had re-opened the grant funding for new defibrillators to local communities. The Village Hall Committee were looking to make an application but he had suggested that it be delayed as they could not reclaim VAT like the Parish Council. The School had a defibrillator but he was not sure if it could be located outside and they did not have a cabinet.

It was agreed that Councillor Short seek clarification from the school on whether the defibrillator could be located outside.

101. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING

The following issues were raised:

Remembrance Wreath
Taw and Torridge Estuary Forum
Parish Survey
Councillor ID badges

102. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

It was noted that the next Parish Council meeting would be on Tuesday 21st October 2025 7.00 p.m.

Chairman The meeting ended at 9.07 p.m.